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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to propose the "management team"--in which the entire administrative staff influences policy making--as the means for administering Ohio's public schools. Included in the paper are a statement of the problem, underlying propositions, some general principles, recommendations for action, necessary commitments, and expected benefits. A self-evaluation scale designed to help a school district determine the degree to which its present management operation approximates the management team model is included as an appendix. (MCG)

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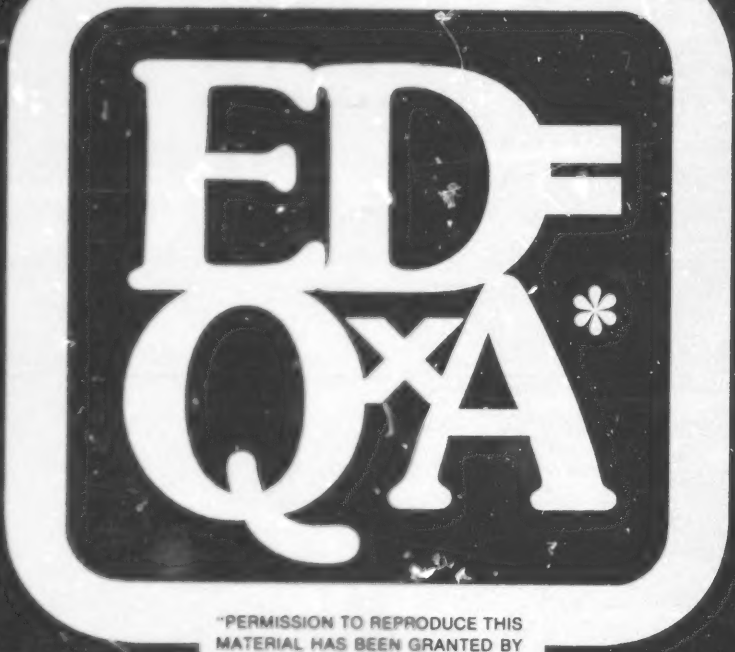

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The work of education unites the participating groups, through access to the educative forces and through common service to the facts, into a model of the great community.

Martin Buber
Pointing the Way

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Prologue

In his classic book *Management*, Peter Drucker points up the importance of management: *For management is the organ, the life giving, acting, dynamic organ of the institution it manages. Without the institution, there would be no management. But without management there would also be only a mob rather than an institution.*

Management is indeed the vital organ of an institution. It provides direction through vision and leadership. It holds the parts together through communication and coordination-and determines whether an organization is a system of interrelated elements or an assemblage of unrelated elements. Without effective management in an organization, there is likely to be chaos.

Effective management is needed in all types of organizations, including business and industry, governmental agencies, hospitals, and school districts. Good management is needed in public education systems just as much as in the private sector.

Many board members and administrators are searching for an effective approach to managing their school systems. The autocratic model is being increasingly challenged in this age of collaboration and participation. We find that the *laissez-faire* model cannot meet the demands of organizational accountability. And certainly the power-coercive approach to management cannot be considered the ideal toward which we should strive. A different approach to educational management is needed.

The purpose of this paper is to propose the "management team" as the means for operating Ohio's public schools. Included in the paper are a statement of the problem, underlying propositions, some general principles, recommendations for action, necessary commitments, and expected benefits. A self-evaluation scale designed to help a school district determine the extent to which its present management operation approximates the management team model is included as an appendix.

In an effort to provide a common understanding of the management team concept, the state educational associations involved in management have cooperatively developed this position paper as a working document to assist boards of education and administrators to increase their effectiveness in school management. The participating organizations are committed to the management team approach for operating Ohio's public schools. Each seeks to advance this concept as the ideal means of operating schools.

Problem

It should be clear that the autocratic model of management is an undesirable leadership style. Here we find that the organizational structure is well-defined hierarchy, with each person knowing what to do, and they comply "or else." Managers are "bosses" in the traditional sense of the term.

In his book *The Human Organizations*, Rensis Likert lists some of the salient characteristics of the autocratic organization rigid organizational structure . . . information flows downward . . . use of fear, threats, punishment . . . only the high levels of management feel responsibility . . . much fear and distrust . . . little cooperative teamwork . . . decisions made at the top . . . goal setting accomplished by orders issued . . . control process is concentrated in top management . . . control data are used in a punitive manner.

Through his extensive research on different styles of management, Likert has clearly identified some of the more common results of autocratic management. He found such outcomes as low job satisfaction among the staff, high turnover, greater likelihood of psychosomatic illnesses, and poorer job performance. It also seems clear that various groups within the organization are more likely to move toward collective bargaining in the autocratic organization than in the more participative or democratic organization. These results point up the importance of choosing an alternative to the autocratic approach to management.

Propositions

The vast literature on the subject of management presents a diversity of definitions of management. Included are: Management is getting things done through people . . . Management is decision making . . . Management is a process of organizing and employing resources to accomplish predetermined objectives . . . Management is creating an environment that allows people to accomplish their objectives. Each of these definitions does indeed represent one aspect of management, but each is too limited in scope to serve as a general definition of management.

It would appear that certain elements of management are essential: (1) formulating realistic and challenging objectives, (2) working with people, (3) obtaining material resources, (4) achieving coordination among objectives, people, and material resources, and (5) providing leadership — "showing the way."

In consideration of all these elements, we propose the following definition of management: MANAGEMENT INVOLVES ASSUMING A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN FORMULATING REALISTIC AND CHALLENGING OBJECTIVES AND DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE—IN WORKING WITH PEOPLE AND MATERIAL RESOURCES—TO ACHIEVE AGREED UPON OBJECTIVES.

The job of management involves five broad functions:

Planning: assessing needs, setting goals and objectives, developing a strategy for achieving the goals and objectives, allocating resources.

Organizing: breaking down the work necessary to achieve the objectives and establishing a means for coordinating the efforts of the job holders.

Staffing: obtaining and building the staff needed to operate a high-performing unit or organization.

Implementing: carrying out the day-to-day activities required for achieving the objectives and assisting others in achieving their objectives.

Evaluating: determining how well the objectives are being achieved and what changes should be made.

These management functions may be carried out by means of either autocratic management or the management team. With autocratic management, decisions are made unilaterally,

"from the top down." With the management team, on the other hand, there is a high degree of involvement among those persons who will be influenced by the decisions. *The basis thesis of this paper is that board of education and administrators should opt for the management team as the means of operating their schools.*

To illustrate the application of the management team approach in a school district, we may consider the functioning of three teams: the policy team, the administrative team, and the instructional team.

The **policy team** consists of the board of education, the superintendent, and the treasurer, with the board president serving as team leader. Primary responsibilities of this team are establishing policies to guide the school district and assuring that the policies are carried out.

The **administrative team** is composed of all of the administrators within the school system, with the superintendent serving as team leader. This team is responsible for carrying out the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, implementing, and evaluating under the guidance of the policies established by the policy team.

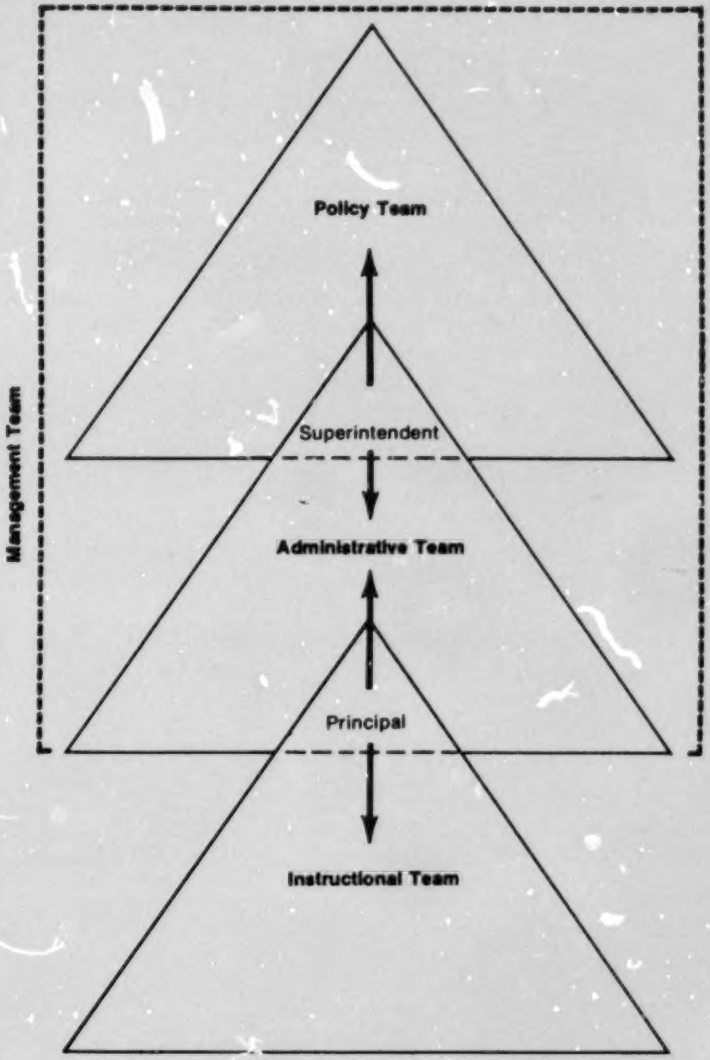
The **instructional team** consists of the school building staff, with the principal serving as team leader. This team is responsible for the direct delivery of educational services to students.

These three teams are connected by "linking pins," as described in Likert's *New Patterns of Management.* The superintendent serves as the linking pin connecting the policy team and the administrative team, and the principal serves as the linking pin connecting the administrative team and the instructional team. In addition to his or her decision-making role, each linking pin has the responsibility for communicating information both upward and downward in the organization.

While the operation of schools is carried out through the interaction of these three teams, the management function is carried out by the policy team and the administrative team. Thus, the uniting of these two teams constitutes the **management team.**

We consider next the characteristics of an effective management team.

Three Teams Connected Through Linking Pins



Characteristics

Many years ago, the philosopher George Hegel pointed up the importance of involvement: *"Interest" means to be in, to be part of something. A purpose of which I am to be active must in some way be my own purpose.*

In his book *Leadership Skills*, Norman Maier states: *Two difference dimensions seem to be relevant in appraising a decision's potential effectiveness. One of these is the impersonal or objective* quality *of the decision; the other has to do with its* acceptance *or the way the persons who must execute the decisions feel about it.*

Whenever making a major decision, the educational manager should recall Maier's basic formula that an effective decision is one that meets two criteria: (1) it has high technical quality and (2) it is acceptable to those who will implement the decision. Thus,

ED = Q x A

where ED=Effective Decision, Q=Quality, A=Acceptance, and the product sign indicates the multiplicative power of the interaction of Quality and Acceptance.

Indeed, we can see the power of participation in the management team. But it is important to note that, even though there is wide participation in the decision-making process within any given team, the designated leader of the team is accountable for the final decision. This accountability cannot be delegated to the team.

In *The Human Organization*, Rensis Likert reminds us that the superior cannot escape accountability: *The group method of supervision holds the superior fully responsible for the quality of all decisions and for their implementation. He is responsible for building his (staff) into a group which makes the best decisions and carries them out well. The superior is accountable for all decisions, for their execution, and for their results.*

In addition to a high degree of participation in the decision-making process, an effective management team has a number of other important characteristics. Some of these attributes are:

- Each member of the team has a clear understanding of job expectations and responsibilities.
- An effort is made to decentralize decision-making authority to the greatest extent possible.

- All management team members have an opportunity to assess the impact of policies and regulations prior to adoption.
- A system of communication provides for a regular flow of information between and among teams and team members.
- There is team participation in problem-solving and goal-setting.
- There is an attitude of trust and cooperation between and among team members.
- Administrators are represented on the board's negotiating team in an active or advisory capacity.
- Administrators recognize that they are management personnel and have a responsibility for representing the interests of the public and their elected representatives.
- The board of education demonstrates its belief that administrators are management personnel by guaranteeing meaningful participation, providing reasonable job security, and assuring compensation commensurate with time, responsibility, and training requirements.
- The team concept of operating the district's elementary and secondary schools has been reduced to writing and adopted as an official policy of the board of education.
- All team members are working toward common goals.

Recommendations

Assume that the board of education and administrators in a school district are interested in implementing the management team concept in their schools. What should be done? We recommend a five-step process.

First, there must be a genuine commitment by the board of education and the superintendent to implement the management team concept—and this commitment should be in writing as an official board policy.

Next, the policy team should make a self-assessment to identify the discrepancies between its present mode of management and the management team mode as described in this paper.

Next the policy team should develop a plan of action for moving from the existing mode of operation toward the management team mode.

Then, the team should implement the plan throughout the school district.

Finally, the team should carefully evaluate the implementation of the plan and make necessary adjustments as deemed appropriate.

In carrying out this plan of action, it is important that the participants be patient in their expectations to see positive results. Major changes cannot be expected to occur overnight. Research has shown that anywhere from one to three years may be required to implement fully a new style of management - depending, of course, on the size of the organization and the status of the management operation at its adoption. In addition to the requirement for new knowledge and new skills, the introduction of the management team concept will require significant change in attitudes among members of the management team. All of this takes time.

Commitments

The management team concept is defined here as a united effort of the policy team and the administrative team in carrying out the management functions in a school district. Implementation of this concept will require substantial changes in the mode of operation for many districts. It should be understood at the outset that the management team approach will require a strong commitment as well as a redefined role for all members of both the policy team and the administrative team. The various parties must be committed to the success of the management team concept.

Boards of education must understand that a commitment to the management team approach will require that administrators be treated as management. This includes matters of participation, compensation, and support by other team members. The board also must recognize that adoption of the management team will require an investment of additional time and effort.

The superintendent must be willing to relinquish previously held power and influence. Since the management team functions largely at the discretion of the chief executive officer, it is important that provisions be made for greater participation by other administrators in the decision-making process. This does not mean that the board of education will no longer hold the superintendent accountable for many key decisions.

The treasurer is in the unique position of maintaining a delicate balance between being directly accountable to the board of education while at the same time serving as a financial consultant to the superintendent. Business officials must recognize that the superintendent, as the leader of the administrative team, serves as the liaison between the administrative team and the policy team.

Administrators must recognize that leaving the rank of teachers to become a part of management brings with it a change in expectations on issues such as excessive job security. In addition, it seems clear that collective bargaining by administrators is incompatible with the management team approach to operating public schools.

Benefits

Any school district that effectively implements the management team approach can expect to derive a number of distinct benefits:

- There will be a greater sense of community among all members of the management team
- Communication will be improved throughout the school district.
- There will be a higher degree of trust between and among the members of the management team.
- Administrators will achieve more rapid job growth as a result of their assuming greater managerial responsibilities.
- Both the quality and the acceptance of decisions should be improved.
- It is less likely that administrators will desire to form collective bargaining units.
- The overall productivity of both the policy team and the administrative team should be higher.

These are significant benefits to be expected from the implementation of the management team approach. But the most important benefit of all is *improved educational services for students.* In the final analysis, this is what the paper is all about.

A Management Perspective

The officers, governing bodies, and staff members of the Ohio school management organizations believe in the management team concept of operating the public schools. To reinforce this belief, the Ohio management organizations support the following commitments:

1. That the superintendent, in cooperation with the board of education, make a sincere effort to establish a climate conducive to the management team concept and accept school administrators as an integral part of the management team.

2. That the board of education view its administrators as a unique class of employees who enjoy a collegial, non-adversarial relationship with the board of education and should be treated in accordance with their status as an integral member of the management team.

3. That the school administrators recognize the board of education as the duly elected representatives of the public, entitled to the same respect, trust, and loyalty due other team members.

4. That school administrators recognize the board's legal and final authority as elected officials in decisions affecting the operation of the school system.

5. That the board of education recognize that school administrators should be compensated in accordance with the responsibilities they assume as administrators and as members of the management team.

6. That school administrators recognize that an adversarial collective bargaining effort is incompatible with the management team concept. It is agreed that communications must occur regularly on matters such as salaries, benefits and issues which impact on the operation of schools.

7. That school administrators do not approve of positions such as strikes and binding arbitration.

8. That the board of education, in the spirit of the law, provide administrators with the opportunity to discuss reasons for their nonrenewal.

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Appendix: A Management Team Self-Evaluation Scale

School District _____ Date _____

Check Position:
Board Member _____
Business Official _____
Central Office _____
Principal _____
Superintendent _____
Other (Specify) _____

Has the Board of Education made a commitment in writing to the management team concept?

Yes _____
No _____

Instructions

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help you as a board member or administrator — determine how closely the existing management operation in your district approximates the management team model as described in this paper. Included in the questionnaire are a number of items that characterize the management team concept.

This assessment will be useful to you only if you are *completely honest* in evaluating the management operation in your district.

Each item on this questionnaire makes a statement about the management in your schools. Please read each statement carefully. Then indicate the extent to which the stated condition actually exists in your school district, according to the following scale:

5 = To a very large extent
4 = To a fairly large extent
3 = To a moderate extent
2 = To a slight extent
1 = Not at all
? = Do not know

1. An effective communication system exists between and among all levels of the management team. ____

2. Administrators are made to feel welcome at board meetings. ____

3. The board of education appreciates and supports the efforts of district administrators. ____

4. Administrators understand and support the efforts of the board of education. ____

5. Administrators meet to discuss and resolve their common problems. ____

6. Administrators have an opportunity to suggest items for the agenda of the administrative meetings. ____

7. Administrators feel free to speak out at administrative meetings even if their views are contrary to the majority point of view. ____

8. There is wide involvement of administrators in the development of the school district budget. ____

9. Administrators have an opportunity to make appropriate input to employment, promotion, and dismissal decisions concerning school district budget. ____

10. Input from administrators is solicited as proposed administrative rules and regulations are being developed. ____

11. Input from administrators is solicited as proposed board policies are being developed. ____

12. Administrators support district policies and regulations even when they are not in agreement. ____

13. Administrators are represented on the board's negotiating team. ____

14. Job descriptions have been prepared for all administrators. ____

15. The district conducts formal performance appraisals with the administrators on a regular basis. ____

16. The district has a fair and rational procedure for determining salaries and fringe benefits for administrators. ____

17. Administrator salaries and fringe benefits are in line with other district employees based on time on the job, level of responsibility, and amount of training. ____

18. Salaries and benefits for administrators compare favorably with their counterparts in similar districts. ____

19. Administrators are granted multi-year contracts following a probationary period. ____

20. The district has a staff development program for administrators. ____

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The Management Team: A Recommended Approach for Operating Ohio's Public Schools is endorsed by the following organizations:

Buckeye Association of School Administrators
Ohio Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators
Ohio Association of Pupil Personnel Administrators
Ohio Association of School Business Officials
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators
Ohio School Boards Association
Ohio School Supervisors Association
Ohio School Psychologists Association

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